Hast thou no Letters to me from the Frier?

Man. No my good Lord.

Exit.

Rom. No matter, get thee gone,
And hire those Horses, Ile be with thee straight.
Well *Juliet*, I will lye with thee to night.
Let's see for meanes. O mischiefe thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men:
I doe remember an Apothecary,
And hereabouts he dwels, which late I noted
In tattred weeds, with over-whelming browes
Culling of simples; meager were his lookes,
Sharpe misery had worne him to the bones,
And in his needy shop a Tortoise hung,
An Allegater stuft, and other skinnes
Of ill shap't fishes, and about his shelves
A beggerly accompt of emptie boxes,
Greene earthen pots, bladders, and mustie seeds,
Remnants of packthred, and old Cakes of Roses
Were thinly scattered, to make up a shew.
Noting this penury, to my selfe I said,
And if a man did need a poyson now,
Whose sale is present death in *Mantua*,
Here lives a Caitiffe wretch would sell it him.
O this same thought did but fore-run my need,
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house,
Being holy-day the beggers shop is shut:
What ho? Apothecary.

Apo. Who calls so loud?

Ro. Come hither man: I see that thou art poore,
Hold, there is forty Duckets, let me have
A dram of poyson, such soone spreading geare
As will disperse it selfe through all the veines,
That the life-wearie taker may fall dead,
And that the truncke may be discharg'd of breath,
As violently as hasty powder fier'd

Doth hurry from the fatall Canons wombe.

Appo. Such mortall drugs I have, but *Mantua's* law
Is death to any he that utters them.

Rom. Art thou so bare and full of wretchednesse,
And fear'st to dye? famine is in thy cheekes,
Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes,
Contempt and beggery hang upon thy back,
The world is not thy friend, nor the worlds law,
The world affords no law to make thee rich,
Then be not poore, but breake it and take this.

Apo. My poverty but not my will consents.

Rom. I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

Apo. Put this in any liquid thing you will,
And drinke it off; and if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

Ro. There is thy gold, worse poison to mens soules,
Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou maist not sell:
I sell thee poyson, thou hast sold me none.
Farewell, buy food, aud get thy selfe in flesh.
Come Cordiall and not poyson, goe with me
To *Juliets* grave, for there must I use thee.

Exeunt.

Enter Frier John *to Frier* Laurence.

Joh. Holy Franciscan Frier, brother, ho.

Enter Laurence.

Lau. This same should be the voice of Frier *John*,
Welcome from *Mantua*: what sayes *Romeo*?
Or if his minde be writ, give me his Letter.

Joh. Going to finde a barefoot brother out,
One of our Order, to associate me,
Here in the City visiting the sicke,
And finding him; the Searchers of the towne,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
Where the infectious pestilence did raigne,
Seal'd up the doores, and would not let us forth,
So that my speed to *Mantua* there was staid.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet* (STC 22326) LONDON, 1637 THE BRITISH LIBRARY (C.34.k.58) Octavo